

Co-design Methods to Investigate Ways of Increasing Aboriginal Peoples' Use of Needle and Syringe Programs in Western Australia.

Authors:

COCI M¹, LOBO R¹, FRAGOMENI S², GARCIA D², WINDER K³, GAVA P³, EADES F⁴, DOUGLAS R⁴, MCCLOSKEY J⁵, BEVAN J⁶

¹ Curtin University, ² HepatitisWA, ³Peer Based Harm Reduction WA, ⁴Derbarl Yerrigan Health Services Aboriginal Corporation, ⁵Royal Perth Hospital, ⁶Department of Health, Western Australia

Background:

Co-design is a method shown to deliver relevant, real-world solutions, designed in part by those most affected by a problem. This presentation describes the co-design methods utilised in exploratory research with Aboriginal people who inject drugs (consumers) in Western Australia to identify ways of increasing Aboriginal consumers' use of needle and syringe programs (NSP).

Methods:

An Aboriginal Advisory Group and a Co-Design Working Group were established. Four Elders, five Aboriginal consumers and an Aboriginal project officer participated in the co-design process with staff from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, government and non-government organisations, peak bodies, NSP, and research groups to discuss recruitment and remuneration of study participants, ethical issues, yarning guides, data collection and analysis. The research team, an Elder and NSP staff conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with NSP staff (n=18), key informants (n=8), and Aboriginal consumers (n=21), respectively.

Results:

Eight group meetings were held over 12 months. Group members varied their involvement depending on the research activity and their capacity and expertise. Challenges were mainly logistical, related to planning large group meetings. Enablers included time spent building relationships with group members, creating a safe space for all members to contribute their ideas and knowledge, and offering a variety of participation options (large/small group, online, phone/email). The networks of Elders and the rapport of NSP staff with Aboriginal consumers were critical enablers for recruitment and data collection.

Conclusion:

Co-design is about bringing all members of the project along on the 'research journey'. Our project provided opportunities for co-design participants to increase their awareness of other organisations providing services to Aboriginal consumers. Having an Aboriginal-led project established trust and credibility and involving Aboriginal consumers in the co-design process resulted in valuable insights to support data collection. A grant for funding to co-design interventions arising from the data has been submitted.

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